

they were driven out by the Turks. They worked at a restaurant in Newark, New Jersey. At Ellis Island, there was a big board with names of people that passed through there. I noticed their name on the wall!

I'm glad our country is full of immigrants because if no one was brave enough to leave family, friends, and their belongings behind, this country would not be as fascinating as it is. Many people call our country a big mixing pot because people all over the world come to live here. The people mix and blend together like food in a mixing pot. Yet, everyone has their own way of life and their own culture. Everyone is a little different. It is good to be different. Everyone stands out in a crowd!

Do you think that immigration is just in history books and doesn't happen any more? If you do, you are wrong. Today, many people still come to America, like me. I was adopted from South America, just like lots of kids. We came to America with our new families! My mom and dad tell me about the exciting day I became an American citizen. A flag was flown over the United States Capitol for me! I have this flag and a certificate which says:

"This is to certify that the accompanying flag was flown over the United States Capitol on August 26, 1998, at the request of the Honorable John Edward Porter, Member of Congress. This flag was flown for Marissa Rose Lynch in celebration of her receiving U.S. citizenship."

When I look at my flag, it makes me proud to be a part of a new generation of immigrants.

WHY I AM GLAD AMERICA IS A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRANTS

(By Esteban Ochoa)

ST. CLEMENT'S PARISH SCHOOL—2006 NATIONAL CONTEST RUNNER-UP

I am glad that the United States of America is a country of immigrants because you never feel lonely; you just have to look into a crowd to find someone with your same background. When you think you are alone and without friends, you just have to look around and you will find a friend.

When I first transferred from Mexico to my current school in Texas, I did not know how to speak English. I felt alone and confused, but before long, I found that many people in my class spoke Spanish, and I soon made many friends, who eventually helped me learn English and do very well in school.

My case is not different from the story of most of the people who have come to this country from other parts of the world. Having millions of people from hundreds of countries, races, religions and economic backgrounds has created a society unlike any other in this planet.

With diversity comes cultural, economic, and spiritual richness. It is evident everywhere you look, in its food, in its music, in its clothing, and in its churches, just to mention a few examples. This Country has served as refuge for many people who came to the U.S.A. looking for opportunities and in many cases after having suffered extreme hardships.

Those are some of the reasons why I like that America is a country of immigrants. Just when you think that you do not fit in, and that you are alone in this cold world, you can still find variety, alternatives and, consequently, hope in the most unexpected situations.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COLORADO'S BIG THOMPSON FLOOD OF 1976

• Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, today I honor those who lost their lives as well as those who survived Colorado's Big Thompson Flood of 1976.

Thirty years ago, more than 1 foot of rain fell in a matter of hours, causing a flash flood in Big Thompson Canyon. One hundred and forty-four people were killed, and over \$30 million in property damage occurred. We remember those who died in this natural disaster and also the survivors who had to rebuild their lives, working as a community to start over again. Next week, outside of my hometown of Loveland, CO, survivors of this tragedy will gather to commemorate the Big Thompson Flood. Though I cannot be with them in this ceremony, my thoughts and prayers are with them, and I speak on the Senate floor today as a tribute to this special event.

I ask that the following letter, which I wrote for the commemoration ceremony of the Big Thompson Canyon Flood of 1976, be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

JULY 31, 2006.

DEAR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THE VICTIMS OF THE 1976 BIG THOMPSON CANYON FLOOD: I very much wanted to join you today as you gather to remember the 30th Anniversary of one of Colorado's worst natural disasters.

As we look back thirty years, we recall the shock and devastation that took place in this canyon. Joan, myself and our two daughters, who were very young children at the time, will never forget the Big Thompson Flood and the days that followed. We arrived at home just after the flood tore through the canyon and towards Loveland. We were overwhelmed by the destruction we saw as we later viewed the damage.

A number of our friends and clients who lived in the canyon were ravaged by the flash flood and brought their animals to my hospital for care. As the Loveland city health officer at that time, I also remember well the many health issues we faced together as a community. The memories will remain forever with each one of us who experienced this flood or witnessed its devastating effect on so many lives.

Today, we can see the positive results of the communities in the canyon working together to rebuild their lives and their property. Joan's and my thoughts are with you today as we remember the people who lost their lives and the ones who survived and rebuilt.

Today I am entering this letter in the Congressional Record as a tribute to the living and non-living victims of this natural disaster.

Sincerely,

WAYNE ALLARD,
U.S. Senator.●

A TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM OKONIEWSKI

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, this spring, William Okoniewski, one of Wilmington's best, passed away after a long career as a photographer. He was known throughout the community as

the guy who shot all the pictures at weddings, high school graduations, communions, and confirmations.

If you had the Okoniewski Studio logo in the corner of a photo, you knew it was quality work. This was before the era of digital cameras, when our standards were different.

A couple of generations of Delawareans came to admire Bill, and his family. He and his wife of 64 years, Cecelia, had six children, and you could find him coaching winning track teams throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

At his funeral, when his son Stephen read a letter, it reminded me of just why we call Bill's generation the "greatest generation."

The letter was from Art Slote, who on January 9, 1945, was one of five people rescued by Bill in the middle of the Battle of Herrlsheim, in France, near the German border.

In the letter, Mr. Slote said how he had searched for Bill for years, contacting the Army, the Red Cross, and every phone book, trying to locate the guy who saved his life. He finally found him in the late 1990s. He wrote:

I frequently ponder over what impels a man to act as your father did. He could have easily scurried to the rear to save his own skin, and nobody would have criticized him. But he didn't. I wonder if you or I would risk our lives in another's behalf. It must be built into your father's character and sense of morality.

Although slow to admit it, your father's personal bravery, his ability to set aside his fears in behalf of his wounded fellow soldiers, his natural compassion for others in trouble, his modesty in never talking to you about it make this a valor and heroic event.

There is a lesson in those words for all of us in this Chamber and for all Americans. Bill Okoniewski embodied everything that is uniquely American. He understood what it meant to be loyal to our country and to respect your fellow Americans.

He, and his generation, set the example. Today, he is the model for the brave men and women in uniform who are performing equally dangerous acts every day in Iraq and Afghanistan.

One day, and hopefully soon, they too will return home not only having served their country in time of war but going on to lead the kind of professional and family life that Bill lived for decades and decades.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF DOUGLAS, NORTH DAKOTA

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a community in North Dakota that will be celebrating its 100th anniversary. On August 4, the residents of Douglas will gather to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Douglas was founded in 1906 and was proudly named after the nearby Douglas Creek. The creek's name honored Major Douglas, who was stationed at Fort Stevenson in the 1870s. In 1906, Douglas's post office was established under the stewardship of Arthur C.

Bates. Douglas was incorporated as a village in 1908 with A.G. Burgeson as its first mayor.

Today, Douglas remains a small, proud community. Each year, the community gathers together and has picnics in the park. During the summer, many of its residents can be found on the banks of Lake Douglas catching up with friends and family.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding, the residents of Douglas will gather on the weekend of August 4th. There will be an all-school reunion to allow former classmates to reunite with each other, followed by a charity auction. A fireman's rodeo, lawnmower pull, and an event to honor veterans will keep the crowds entertained all weekend. The highlight of the celebration will be the parade, which will feature floats, musical performances, and a fireworks display.

Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating Douglas, ND, and its residents on their first 100 years and in wishing them well through the next century. By honoring Douglas and all the other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the great pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as Douglas that have helped to shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.

Douglas has a proud past and a bright future.●

TRIBUTE TO JAMES HEALY

● Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I to pay tribute to a fine New Jerseyan and a great friend of my State, James Healy. News of Jim's untimely passing this past Friday at the age of 48 saddened all of us in the New Jersey delegation. His great personality and tremendous work ethic truly made him a pleasure to work with and an asset to his organization, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, NJDOT.

For nearly 20 years, Jim held several important posts within the department. Most recently, he served as the NJDOT's Federal liaison. Jim was an expert on Federal legislative, regulatory, and finance issues. He provided my office with valuable expertise and advice concerning subjects of great importance to New Jersey.

New Jersey is the most densely populated State in the Union, and the movement of people and goods through its travel corridors is of utmost importance, not just to New Jerseyans, but for the entire regional economy.

Jim guided the New Jersey delegation through Federal highway bill authorizations, which took years to accomplish. The most recent one, SAFETEA-LU, took 2 years to complete. Jim also worked closely with New Jersey members on aviation reauthorization bills, including the VISION-100 legislation passed in 2003.

He advocated for the State's priorities, including legislation to help pre-

serve open spaces in New Jersey. My staff and I had the pleasure of working with him many times on these bills and he was always a consummate professional: well-informed, thorough in his work, and always extraordinarily helpful.

When a former NJDOT commissioner served as president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, AASHTO, Jim served as liaison to AASHTO staff, where he helped coordinate and set national transportation policy goals.

Jim was an assistant professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University and was a 1979 graduate of William Paterson University, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. He received his law degree in 1983 from Rutgers University in Newark, NJ.

Jim is survived by his parents, Philip and Hannah Healy of Wayne, NJ, and his brothers and sisters, Joseph Healy, Mary Jo Ridge, Kathleen Bianco, Teresa Hoey, and Joan Wielenta. My heart goes out to Jim's family during this difficult time.

I salute the life and memory of this great son of New Jersey, Jim Healy. May he rest in peace.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:47 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill and concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. 310. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey the Newlands Project Headquarters and Maintenance Yard Facility to the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District in the State of Nevada.

S. Con. Res. 60. Concurrent resolution designating the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, as America's National Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

At 2:32 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1496. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a pilot program under which up to 15 States may issue elec-

tronic Federal migratory bird hunting stamps.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 233. An act to designate certain National Forest System lands in the Mendocino and Six Rivers National Forests and certain Bureau of Land Management lands in Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, and Napa Counties in the State of California as wilderness, to designate the Elkhorn Ridge Potential Wilderness Area, to designate certain segments of the Black Butte River in Mendocino County, California as a wild or scenic river, and for other purposes.

H.R. 854. An act to provide for certain lands to be held in trust for the Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe.

H.R. 1307. An act to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate portions of the Musconetcong River in the State of New Jersey as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3082. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make improvements to small business, memorial affairs, education and employment programs for veterans, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3603. An act to promote the economic development and recreational use of National Forest System lands and other public lands in central Idaho, to designate the Boulder-White Cloud Management Area to ensure the continued management of certain National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands for recreational and grazing use and conservation and resource protection, to add certain National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands in central Idaho to the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3817. An act to withdraw the Valle Vidal Unit of the Carson National Forest in New Mexico from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4301. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain parcels of land acquired for the Blunt Reservoir and Pierre Canal features of the initial stage of the Oahe Unit, James Division, South Dakota, to the Commission of Schools and Public Lands and the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks of the State of South Dakota for the purpose of mitigating lost wildlife habitat, on the condition that the current preferential leaseholders shall have an option to purchase the parcels from the Commission, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4947. An act to expand the boundaries of the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5025. An act to protect for future generations the recreational opportunities, forests, timber, clean water, wilderness and scenic values, and diverse habitat of Mount Hood National Forest, Oregon, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5057. An act to authorize the Marion Park Project, a committee of the Palmetto Conservation Foundation to establish a commemorative work on Federal land in the District of Columbia, and its environs to honor Brigadier General Francis Marion.

H.R. 5534. An act to provide grants from moneys collected from violations of the corporate average fuel economy program to be used to expand infrastructure necessary to increase the availability of alternative fuels.

H.R. 5865. An act to amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to temporarily increase funding for the program of temporary assistance for United States citizens returned from foreign countries, and for other purposes.